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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/617,091	07/11/2003	Masahiko Sameshima	001273B	1945

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EXAMINER

KUHNS, ALLAN R

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1732

DATE MAILED: 05/13/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/617,091

Applicant(s)

SAMESHIMA ET AL.

Examiner

Allan Kuhns

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on \_\_\_\_.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2 and 5-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 3 and 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/671,582.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_.

1. Please provide copies of the foreign references cited on the PTO-1449 filed with this application in response to this Office action.

2. It appears that "a" on line 1 of claim 1 should be "an" and that "vents" on line 4 of claim 1 should be singular.

3. Claims 3 and 4 objected to under 37 CFR 1.75(c), as being of improper dependent form for failing to further limit the subject matter of a previous claim. Applicant is required to cancel the claim(s), or amend the claim(s) to place the claim(s) in proper dependent form, or rewrite the claim(s) in independent form. While claims 1 and 2 require mold portions which are devoid of orifices, claims 3 and 4 appear not to further limit those claims by permitting orifices to be only "largely omitted" from the mold portions.

4. Claims 1, 2 and 5-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1 and 2 are indefinite since the use of "such as" on line 3 of each of these claims causes uncertainty about what is included and excluded from the scope of these claims. Also "the bead starting materials" in claims 1 and 2 lacks antecedent basis within the claims. In addition, "the teeth" on line 3 of claims 7 and 8 lacks antecedent basis within the claims, and it appears that "any of" on line 2 of claim 7 is confusing and superfluous. Clarification is required.

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

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invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 1, 5, 6 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Haardt et al. (5,252,270). Haardt et al. disclose or suggest the basic claimed process for in-mold foam molding including providing a molding apparatus whose mold portions provide a mold cavity, the mold cavity having moveable partitioning members for partitioning the mold cavity so as to prevent passage of bead starting materials, the moveable partitioning members being retractable from the mold cavity by drive means (note rods and pressure cylinders disclosed at column 2, line 60), wherein the method includes (1) with the partitions positioned to provide partitioned mold chambers, filling adjacent partitioned mold chambers with bead starting materials of different properties, and (2) retracting the moveable partitioning members after packing the bead starting materials and before the bead starting materials are fused or welded together with steam (column 2, lines 58-64). Haardt et al. appear silent with regard to the cavity being devoid of air orifices in molding sections for molding prominent areas of the outside face of the molded article, but such would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art since Haardt et al. do not provide an indication that such orifices would be necessary in order to carry out a successful molding operation.

Haardt et al. teach or suggest the partition extension and retractions, as well as the mold filling operations of claims 5 and 6. Haardt et al. also at least suggest the use of bead starting materials which effectively have different degrees of expansion, as in

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claim 9, by stating at column 2, lines 42-44 that one way of achieving different densities is to introduce different amounts of beads per unit of volume into various chambers.

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Allan Kuhns whose telephone number is (571) 272-1202. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Thursday from 7:00 to 5:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Colaianni, can be reached on (571) 272-1196. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

*Allan R. Kuhns*  
ALLAN R. KUHN  
PRIMARY EXAMINER AU 1732  
5-11-05